AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A microporous soundproofing material comprising an expanded material formed through the step of impregnating a mixture of an olefin elastomer and an olefin polymer with an inert gas under high pressure of from 6 to 100 MPa and then decompressing the impregnated mixture, wherein:

the expanded material comprises closed cells having an average cell diameter of from 0.1 to 300 μm uniformly distributed throughout the whole interior thereof;

the expanded material has a compressive load at 50% compression of 20 N/cm^2 or lower;

the ratio of characteristic impedance of the microporous soundproofing material to characteristic impedance of air (Z_c^{mat}/Z_c) is from 5 to 50;

and the expanded material contains a flame retardant comprising a hydrated metal compound which is a composite metal hydroxide of $MgO{\cdot}ZnO{\cdot}H_2O$ or $MgO{\cdot}NiO{\cdot}H_2O$ ~~represented by formula (1):~~

~~$m(M_aO_b)\,n(Q_dO_e)\,cH_2O$ ——————— (1)~~

~~wherein M and Q represent different metal elements and Q is a metal element belonging to a group selected from Groups IVa, Va, VIa, VIIa, VIII, Ib, and IIb of the periodic table; and m, n, a, b, c, d, and e may be the same or different and each is a positive number~~.

2. (previously presented) The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material is formed from an unexpanded molding comprising the thermoplastic elastomer.

3. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material is formed from a molten thermoplastic elastomer, and the impregnated elastomer is subjected to molding simultaneously with decompression.

4. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material has undergone heating after the decompression.

5. (original): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the inert gas is carbon dioxide.

6. (original): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the inert gas is in a supercritical state during the impregnation.

7. (original): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the inert gas has a pressure of 10 MPa or higher during the impregnation.

8. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material has a cell density of from 10^5 to 10^{14} cells per cm^3.

9. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material comprises closed cells having an average cell diameter of from 0.1 to 20 μm evenly distributed throughout the whole interior thereof, and the expanded material has a cell density of from $3x10^8$ to 10^{14} cells per cm^3.

10. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material has a relative density of 0.6 or lower.

Claims 11-15 (canceled).

16. (previously presented): A method of improving the soundproofing performance of an electronic appliance, which comprises applying the microporous soundproofing material of claim 1 inside the electronic appliance.

17. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the flame retardant is $MgO•ZnO•H_2O$.